and **82** which are connected by a crossbeam or midsection **84**. The first leg **80** is pivotally connected to one end **78** of the shaft **74** by a pin **86** (FIG. **16**) or the like. The second leg **82** is configured to removably engage the opposite end **88** of the shaft **74** in the retaining configuration (FIG. **15**). In the illustrated embodiment, the second leg **82** has an opening or aperture **90** (FIGS. **16** and **20**) which is configured to receive and retain the opposite end **88** of the shaft **74** in the retaining configuration. To that end, the second leg **82** may be outwardly flared or angled or otherwise contoured (as best illustrated in FIGS. **17-19**). As the latch **76** pivots to the retaining configuration, the second leg **82** will be forced into contact with the contoured opposite end **88** of the shaft **74** (FIG. **18**) and flex or bend outwardly (i.e., away from the first leg **80**) to clear the end **88** of the shaft **74**. The resilience of the latch **76** seats the opposite end **88** of the shaft **74** within the opening **90** in the retaining configuration (FIG. **19**). Accordingly, it may be advantageous for the latch **76** to be comprised of a rigid material which can undergo minor bending without permanent deformation. Suitable materials for the latch **76** include, but are not limited to, stainless steel.

As for the midsection **84** of the latch **76**, it may be advantageous for it to have a width generally the same as the width of the forked upper end **26** of the associated handle **14**. If so configured, when the retainer **62** is latched in place, the legs **80** and **82** will fit snugly around the forked upper end **26**, thereby preventing significant lateral movement or "wiggling" of the retainer **62** on the handle **14**.

The latch **76** may optionally include one or more features which enhance the functionality of the retainer **62**. For example, in the illustrated embodiment, the latch **76** includes a biasing feature, and more specifically the midsection **84** of the latch **76** includes a biasing member or surface **92**. The biasing surface **92** of the midsection **84** is configured to contact the outer surface **66** of the jaw **48** (FIG. **8**) and bias the jaw **48** to an inwardly pivoted position (FIG. **2**) when the retainer **62** is latched onto the jaw **48** and handle **14**. Advantageously, the biasing surface **92** is sufficiently rigid to bias the jaw **48** inwardly, but also capable of flexing or bending outwardly to accommodate some degree of outward pivotal motion of the jaw **48** when the inserter **10** is clamped onto an implant. The biasing surface **92** may be variously configured to have such functionality. For example, in the illustrated embodiment, the biasing member **92** is integrally formed with the latch **76**, forming a flat spring, and inclined approximately 15° from the plane of the midsection **84** (FIG. **20**) in the same direction that the legs **80** and **82** extend. However, other configurations of a biasing surface may also be employed without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

The retainer **62**, and the latch **76** in particular, may also include an orientation feature to reduce the chance of misassembly or mis-orientation of the jaw **48** on its respective handle **14**. As illustrated, the latch **76** includes orientation structures **68** which are configured to cooperate with orientation structures **64** of the associated jaw **48**, such that the orientation structures **64** and **68** accommodate each other in only one orientation, thereby dictating the orientation of the retainer **62** when the latch **76** is moved to the retaining configuration.

More specifically, in the illustrated embodiment, the hinge portion **58** of the jaw base **50** includes two orientation structures **64** which are provided as raised surfaces or projections positioned at the outer or outside-facing surface **66** of the jaw **48** (FIG. **8**). The nature and shape of the orientation structures **64** may vary, depending on the shape of the structure(s) to which they are mated. For example, in the illustrated embodiment, the orientation structures **64** are provided as raised surfaces whereas, in other embodiments, the hinge portion **58** of the jaw **48** may be provided with depressions or cavities serving as orientation features. Further, there may be more or less than two orientation structures, depending on the shape and nature of the structure(s) to which the orientation structures are mated.

The illustrated orientation structures **64** are provided as a pair of vertically oriented, generally oval-, rectangle-, or "racetrack"-shaped projections. The projections **64** are shown as being identical to each other, but other embodiments may include orientation structures which are differently shaped from each other. The projections **64** may be relatively small and/or thin, as they merely provide an orienting function, rather than serving as force-bearing structures.

As for the orientation surfaces **68** of the latch **76**, they are illustrated as generally U-shaped slots or receiving regions which at least partially receive the projections **64** of the jaw **48** when the retainer **62** is latched onto the jaw **48** and handle **14** (FIG. **8**). FIG. **8** also shows how the biasing surface **92** contacts the outer surface **66** of the jaw **48** between the orientation surfaces **64**, thereby providing an additional keying or orienting function. It will be appreciated that, if the orientation surface(s) of the jaw **48** are differently configured than what is illustrated, then the orientation surface(s) of the retainer **62** will also be differently configured to cooperate with them. The jaws and retainers may include other features and arrangements without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

It will be understood that the embodiments described above are illustrative of some of the applications of the principles of the present subject matter. Numerous modifications may be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the claimed subject matter, including those combinations of features that are individually disclosed or claimed herein. For these reasons, the scope hereof is not limited to the above description but is as set forth in the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An orthopedic implant inserter comprising:

first and second facing handles joined for relative movement with respect to one another in a first plane, the first handle including a first opening extending through the first handle and the second handle including a second opening extending through the second handle;

a first implant-engaging jaw removably mounted to the first handle;

a second implant-engaging jaw removably mounted to the second handle, the first and second implant-engaging jaws are spaced apart from and independent of one another, and each implant-engaging jaw is removable from its associated handle independent of removal of the other implant-engaging jaw; and

an adjuster configured to move the first and second handles away from and toward each other, the adjuster comprising:

a shaft that passes through the second opening in the second handle and the first opening in the first handle, the second handle configured to advance along a length of the shaft toward or away from the first handle to move the first and second implant-engaging jaws toward or away from each other; and

a knob configured to control the advancement of the second handle either toward or away from the first handle, the knob movable on a portion of the shaft extending beyond an external side of the second handle,